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SUBJECT: JERUSALEM MEDIA REACTION (10/15): UN Security Council
Discusses the Goldstone Report

Main Stories:

News on yesterday's UN Security Council discussion of the Goldstone report receives prominent coverage in the local press. The reports note that Palestinian Authority (PA) Foreign Minister Riyad Al-Maliki gave a speech criticizing US and UN statements that progress has been achieved towards ending the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, arguing that this is not true. The press also note that Israeli Ambassador to the UN Gabriela Shalev claimed that re-submitting the Goldstone report to the UN aims to distract the world's attention from the real threats in the region (in reference to Iran). She also noted that the Goldstone report is an obstacle to the peace process. The reports also state that the Israeli government said it will not join any peace talks with the Palestinians unless the report is withdrawn from the UN. The three dailies prominently report that the US pledged to veto any UNSC resolution that accuses Israel of committing war crimes.

The dailies continue to report on national reconciliation efforts. The reports note that Fatah will submit its approval for the updated Egyptian plan for reconciliation today, while the Hamas position is still ambiguous. Hamas leader Fawzi Barhoum denied news that Hamas will not respond to the Egyptian plan, but noted that Hamas needs time to study and review the proposal without any pressure. Fatah's Azzam Al-Ahmad reiterated that President Abbas will issue a presidential decree before October 25 saying that presidential and legislative elections must be held by January 2010, according to coverage.

The dailies report on PA Prime Minister Salam Fayyad telling representatives of the foreign press in Ramallah yesterday that the PA will not accept Israel's vision for a Palestinian state, which he

said would be "a Mickey Mouse state." Fayyad also noted that the Palestinians have not yet lost their confidence in President Obama, but criticized the international community's expectation for a resumption of negotiations given the fact that Israel has not fulfilled any of its obligations under the roadmap.

BLOCK QUOTES:

1) Al-Quds independent daily runs an editorial under the title "Don't we have enough obstacles internally that hinder the Palestinian reconciliation?" (10/15): "The US reiterates that any Palestinian unity government has to respect the Quartet principles, a position that won't be helpful at this stage ... The US should work on rectifying the extreme positions adopted by the Bush administration ... The national reconciliation is a strategic goal for the Palestinians and should be perceived that way by the international community ... Therefore, imposing any preconditions of this type means jeopardizing the national reconciliation. This position contradicts US promises to support the revival of the peace process."

2) Azmi Al-khawaja opines in Al-Ayyam daily independent under the title "Obama and the absence of the US pressures on Netanyahu" (10/15): "Obama has let the Palestinians and Arabs down. Nothing has changed from the Bush administration ... Despite all the power he has as the President of the US, Obama is incapable of exerting any pressure on Israel."

RUBINSTEIN